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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES: QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 6 July 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea today, 6 July 1998, on yet another deportation of Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin by the Ethiopia Government (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 20, 105 and 110, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tesfa Alem SEYOUM
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

ANNEX

Press release issued on 6 July 1999 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Eritrea

Tigre People's Liberation Front regime resumes mass deportation of Eritreans

One thousand four hundred and ten Eritrean civilians deported from Addis Ababa arrived at the port city of Assab early yesterday morning. The Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin were expelled through the Burie front line 70 kilometres west of Assab. The deportees included expectant mothers, children and several handicapped and gravely ill people. A large number of the deportees had lived their entire life in Ethiopia and carried Ethiopian passports. They said they had been arrested and detained for periods ranging between three days and 10 months prior to their deportation.

Reliable sources in Addis Ababa are reporting that the Tigre People's Liberation Front regime is commencing another round of arbitrary arrest and deportation of Eritreans. This group of Eritreans is thought to be only the first batch of some 15,000 Eritreans who remain destitute in Addis Ababa and who will be deported in the coming days.

Many of the expelled Eritreans had been separated from family members who had been deported earlier and said they had become virtually destitute, having been denied employment and, in many cases, thrown out of their homes. They said the situation remains desperate for many Eritreans who have lost all means of income but have been prevented from leaving Ethiopia. Local journalists in Assab reported that seven of the deportees are currently in the Assab hospital recovering from heat exhaustion, dehydration and other conditions associated with the difficult journey.

Yesterday's arrivals bring the two-day total to 3,000. Thirty-one Eritreans were also expelled from Tigray between 23 June and 3 July after having their property confiscated. To date, the Tigre People's Liberation Front regime has deported 60,000 Eritreans from Ethiopia on the basis of their ethnicity.